Dialect convergence in German speech islands
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1 Speech island research: traditional framework and sociolinguistic demands

„Speech island” research is bound to deal with linguistic convergence or divergence: In a sociolinguistic view, it has to answer the question if, how and why a more or less distinct linguistic community on a limited area keeps its distinctness from the different speaking surrounding\(^1\) - or if, how and why linguistic convergence leads to the subsequent loss of this distinctness and to the „inundation” of the speech island.

At first glance this is, of course, connected to interlinguistic convergence. But since speech islands are to a certain extent „closed” communities, they have also been attracting researcher’s interest as a „fast breeder” of small scale, but high speed intralinguistic convergence.\(^2\)

For a long time research on German language enclaves, traditionally called German speech islands („Sprachinseln”\(^3\)), was a major subject of German dialectology. Since German dialectology (after Indo-European studies the second main field of research in German linguistics of the late 19\(^{th}\) and beginning 20\(^{th}\) century) was prominent in international linguistics for some time, speech island research has been a methodological touchstone of the paradigms envolved: Dialect geography\(^4\) tried to prove the areal linguistics’ framework by speech island research as well as the Neogrammarians\(^5\) took up this subject by means of numerous „Local Grammars” and also the later „Kulturraumforschung”\(^6\) was involved in the dialectological description of the linguistic heritage of the so called German East Colonization.

The notion of a speech island is a metaphor. The imagination evoked by this metaphor is prototypically based on the historical evolvement of „colonies” of German-speaking settlers.

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1 Mattheier (1996: 817) argues for this subject as the very task of sociolinguistic speech island research.
2 To put it with Schirmunski (1930), speech islands have been regarded as a kind of a „language laboratory” bringing about linguistic processes in short time which emerged over centuries on the way to our contemporary standard languages. Even if this might be a myth, overestimating the output of koineization in the Black Sea colonies, Schirmunski’s focussing on dialect levelling, its forces and resources rather than on the linguistic origins of the settlers was paradigmatic.
3 „Sprachinseln sind räumlich abgrenzbare und intern strukturierte Siedlungsräume einer sprachlichen Minderheit inmitten einer anderssprachigen Mehrheit” (Huberter 1982: 178).
4 „Sprachinseln sind punktuell oder areal auftretende, relativ kleine geschlossene Sprach- und Siedlungsgemeinschaften in einem anderssprachigen, relativ größeren Gebiet” (Wiesinger 1983: 901).
5 Georg Wenker and his followers of the Marburg school, after 1876 up to the 1920s.
6 Several researchers (and numerous philologists) in the tradition of the Leipzig school, following the prototypical „Ortsgrammatik” of Jost Winteler 1876, mainly around the turn of the century.
7 Following Theodor Frings, mainly between World War I and II.
in East, Middle East and South East Europe, which were mostly built in the High Middle Ages („old speech islands“) and in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} century („young speech islands“). These colonies had survived for a long time as „erratic blocks“ living separate from the majority at ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economical, administrational and sometimes religious distance. They did what they were supposed to do: On behalf of the official authorities or private colonizers, they were founded to fulfill special purposes – to cultivate the land; to introduce new methods in agriculture, trade, handicraft, and mining; to stabilize the frontiers or to increase the proportion of educated, skillful (and sometimes even „white“) population. Thus, they did not mingle with the surrounding ethnic groups.

The immense work, which has been done in this field, is heterogeneous by nature: hundreds of historical and philological, ethnological and folkloristic reports – and since the 19\textsuperscript{th} century: dialectological studies concerning German speech islands as mentioned above.\footnote{The first reports on speech islands trace back to the 16\textsuperscript{th} (Transylvania/Romania) and 17\textsuperscript{th} (Zips/Slovakia) century (cf. Kuhn 1934: 76f.). For the first time, the term „Sprachinsel“ was used in 1847 applied to a Slavic community surrounded by a German-speaking population close to Königsberg, East Prussia (now Kaliningrad/Russia; cf. Mattheier 1996: 812).}

Investigations of the first period were done by German dialectologists (not by researchers from the speech islands), as for example Johann Andreas Schmeller who included the German speech island dialects of the South Tyrol and Venetia into his famous work on the Bavarian dictionary\footnote{In the year 1833 Schmeller travelled through the so called „cimbric“ communities of the „Sette e Tredici Communi“; cf. Schmeller (1838): „Über die sogenannten Cimbern der Sieben und Dreizehn Communen auf den venedischen Alpen und ihre Sprache“; cf. Schmeller (1855, posthum).}, Jakob Grimm influenced and triggered the collection of speech island vocabulary. In the beginning, the main interest was directed to the old speech islands close to the German language area, as Transylvania, the Zips, and Venetia. In the later 19\textsuperscript{th} century Gottschee (Slovenia), Temesvar, Banat (Hungary/Romania), and even speech islands in Pennsylvania\footnote{Pennsylvania Dutch was the first subject of interest concerning speech islands far away from the German language area. Very early German-American researchers carried out several studies on Pennsylvania Dutch (S. S. Haldemann in 1872 or the dictionaries of A. R. Horne in 1875 and J. C. Lins in 1887).} and Australia were included. After the turn of the century several „Ortsgrammatiken“ were published.\footnote{The first „Ortsgrammatik“ of a speech island (Zips) was V. Luntzzer (1894): „Die Leibitzer Mundart“. In: Paul und Braune, Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur. Until WW I a series of similar works was published, concerning almost all of the German speech islands in Hungary and also several studies on the Alpine region, the most famous Bohnenberger (1913).} Since then also the younger speech islands were subject to dialectological studies, more and more by researchers of these communities themselves. After World War I attention was paid to the German-speaking population in Russia, at first in the great cities, then in the rural colonies of the Black Sea region and around Petersburg (Schirmunski, Ström) as well as of the Volga region (Dinges, Dulsan). Between World War I and II speech island research increased remarkably. This was in part related to language shift processes which all German speech islands were confronted with, and it was motivated by the preservation of speech island dialects which were supposed to be inevitably condemned to perish.

In times of modernisation, unification and nation building in the East and Middle East European countries these colonies got into more intense contact with the host societies. In general, the late take off of these societies caused at first an „external“ diglossia in the colonies: The majority language has been introduced into administrative affairs, external trade and (higher) education. In the second part of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century these colonies got under pressure of the national and local authorities, at first in Hungary, at the end of the century also in Russia, in Poland and Czechoslovakia at latest after WW I. With increasing contact and mobility diglossia became „internal“\footnote{The prototypical speech island will display „external“ diglossia, not „internal“ diglossia. The emergence of internal diglossia in the speech islands were interpreted as the beginning of their erosion and caused the...}, the autonomy of the German settlements was diminished and the local élites began to assimilate.
After World War II most of the speech islands’ inhabitants in East and Middle East Europe emigrated to Germany. Thus, in the first post-war decades a great amount of dialectological work was done in order to describe and preserve the migrants’ dialects which were now „rootless”.


Speech island research is linked to contact linguistics and variational linguistics in many ways. A speech island may be regarded as a special case of a linguistic minority. But the border lines of speech island research are rather dotted than strict. This comes true particularly in the very moment when speech islands are subject to internal or external convergence and to internally or externally induced change.

In the traditional framework of the German dialectology, however, language variation and language contact were considered to be rather a contamination than a focal subject of speech island research. So, what might have been the reason for this exclusion? Why did German dialectologists choose speech islands as a prototypical field of investigation? And what is „prototypical” with speech islands?

To a great extent speech island studies have been motivated by the researchers’ interest in the description of language change, particularly in the reconstruction of former stages of linguistic processes. Most of the linguistic communities examined by speech island researchers were rather small units with restricted communicational activities outside, easily observable in time and space, explorable as a whole\footnote{Kuhn (1934: 6) pleads for a holistic description as the main task of speech island research.}. Since these „conservative” communities had frequently preserved old features of the German language speech islands were supposed to offer a unique observability of former linguistic elements which have been died out in the German language inland area. In a way, dialectologists have been archivists of linguistic fossils and interpreters of their life and death.

The Sette Communi in Northern Italy were subject to this kind of studies – for good reason: The Bavarian dialect of this speech island is considered to be the oldest German dialect, a „first class linguistic monument” (Hornung 1994: 20, transl. P.R.). It has preserved a remarkable amount of Old and Middle High German features, e.g. a very old consonantism, the preterite which has vanished in the Bavarian dialects elsewhere 400 years ago, the genitive case and some others.

The Tredici Communi nearby are somehow more „modern”. Under the influence of other German (Alemannic) dialects, Romance and Slavic contact languages they were exposed to various processes of change, e.g. the reduction of the inflectional morpheme /–a/ to /–e/ ([tsunga] > [isunge] High German standard Zunge ‘tongue’).
The description of internal change or external interference requires patterns of „unaffected” purity. The myth of purity and homogeneity has been perhaps the most attractive feature of speech islands.

However, speech islands present a vast variety of internally structured linguistic communities under extremely differing contact settings, and speech island research is by all means a heterogeneous subject. Some of the factors affecting the linguistic fate of a speech island will be arranged in the following section:

Speech islands have been founded through very different times and under very different conditions. As common traits, most of them share a limited area, enclosing a linguistically different community linked by a dense communicative network (in the sense of Milroy/Margrain 1980 and Gumperz 1968) which is to a certain extent more introvert than extrovert, and connected by attitudinal distinctness.

None the less, speech islands are linguistically and socially structured. They often inhabit settlers of different origins, of different dialects and of different migration periods. After some time social élites emerge: While clergymen and teachers often support the maintenance of the speech island’s culture, local authorities are frequently more linked to the world outside. However, they should not necessarily be regarded as door openers for external influence or as „lames” (in the Labovian meaning), but sometimes rather as „marginal men” (in the sense of the Chicago school, Alfred Schütze), as bridge builders in both directions, integrating external and internal demands and balancing bilingualism and biculturalism.

Some speech islands are communities with restricted social and linguistic structure: communities under a protective „hood”. But if the development was uninterrupted, some speech islands reached the stage of infrastructural complexity:

Speech islands are remote villages (in the „outbacks” of the Italian Alps, the Brazilian woods or the Siberian steppe), suburbs in the vicinity of cities (e.g. close to Budapest/Hungary), towns (Iglau, Moravia/Czech Republic; Bielitz, Silesia/Poland) or complex structured areas with towns and villages (around Hermannstadt/Sibiu in Transylvania/Romania).

Depending on the duration and separateness of settlement and the heterogeneity of linguistic varieties they display different stages of language variation systems: from (sometimes coexisting) local vernaculars (Siberia; Kazakhstan) to more or less mixed, levelled or merged dialects (Mennonite colonies, Chaco/Paraguay; Volga region/Russia), koines or regiolects („Hunsrück” variety in South Brazil; Volhynian German/Ukraine, today scattered all over Russia) up to urban vernaculars with superregional usage (Hermannstadt/Romania). The Transylvanian case could be regarded as an elaborated „Ausbau” speech island (in the terminology of Heinz Kloss) with the full range of a linguistically differentiated variational diasystem.

Frequently speech islands dispose of „roofless dialects”, i.e. the local speech island variety and the „roofing” standard language do not belong to the same diasystem. This is true for most of them, but not for all: Sometimes the speech island contained a German dialect within a different speaking majority language area overarched by the German standard as the state’s

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20 Milroy/Margrain (1980) point to the density and multiplexity of communicative networks, i.e. to realized communicational acts; Gumperz (1968) focusses on „personal networks” related to a shared set of social norms (different from „transactional networks”).

21 Cf. Kuhn (1934).


26 Löffler (1983) argues to draw a distinction between „language islands” and „dialect islands”.
language as it was the case in the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy (and locally also in the eastern provinces of Prussia, now Poland, or in Bohemia and Moravia for some time), and in general, of course, in the so called „interior speech islands“ („Binnensprachinseln“).

Mattheier (1996) discusses some important differentiations concerning the settings of language contact speech islands are exposed to:

„Progressive“ (or „expanding“) speech islands have been the prototype of the German colonization in Middle and South Eastern Europe. „Regressive“ speech islands display other characteristics than „progressive“ ones, particularly in terms of attitudinal items. The French-speaking community in Quebec might be considered a regressive speech island, and the separatistic attitudes of a part of this community are related to the feeling to be the last bridgehead of the former French Belt.

„Introvertial“ speech islands are self-contained groups of religious speech islands like the Mennonites in Russia, Paraguay, Mexico and the United States or the Hutterites in the USA. These groups are most resistant to external influence, but differ considerably in the extent of separateness.

On the other hand, mobility of the inhabitants and discontinuity of the settlement, ethnically mixed settlements or speech islands dispersed among a different speaking population are factors which may induce assimilation.

As Mattheier concludes, the most important sociolinguistic output of all intervening factors is an attitudinal structure of distinctness as the decisive basis of non-assimilation.

Obviously, the reconstruction of language change within speech islands has to consider the internally and externally heterogeneity of their structures. Homogeneity and purity of speech islands turn out to be a rare phenomenon which is rather a temporary exception than prototypical. Thus, speech island research has to take into account the interdependence of language change, language variation and language contact.

But what is the nature of this interdependence and how does it affect linguistic convergence?

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27 Cf. Wiesinger (1983). Examples of this type are the Palatine speech island in the low Rhineland, Germany (cf. Böhmer 1909) as well as the Alemannic dialect of Neuberg on Rhine within the Palatinate dialect area (cf. Karch 1978) or the „Yankee speech island“ of Marietta, Ohio, a Northern dialect relic area within a South Midland dialect region in Ohio (Clark 1972: 2). The Saxonian migrants (investigated by Auer/Barden/Großkopf 1996) which moved from Eastern to Southwestern Germany right after the reunification could also be discussed in terms of this concept, but they are probably not forming a linguistic community which lasts for enough time, but assimilate to the German standard or the regional variety.

28 Cf. also the speech island typology of Kuhn (1934: 324ff.).


2 Dialect convergence in German speech islands

Speech island research might serve as a fruitful field for investigating convergence because of four reasons:

- These communities frequently consist of several dialects rapidly merging.
- A roofing standard language of its own diasystem rarely exists and therefore does not slow down linguistic change.
- Intensive language contact gives evidence of whether linguistic change is internally or externally induced (or both) if contact settings are compared.
- Since community boundaries are a matter of minority survival speech island research is bound to work interdisciplinary including sociolinguistic, historical, ethnological and other methods.

Since we are concerned with German as a minority language in Eastern Europe, especially in the former Soviet Union, but also in Poland and Hungary, as well as in Western Europe and also in Latin America, particularly Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Chile, we want to contribute to a comparative research on dialect convergence by presenting some results of studies in some of these countries.

In his famous work on „Principles of linguistic history” Hermann Paul (1880) already emphasized the importance of research on convergence and language „mixing”:

„Among all questions which linguistics is concerned with today, there is no one of greater importance than language mixing”. And he expands this to dialect mixing as well as Hugo Schuchardt did, when he stated that he didn’t know any language or dialect without language mixing (cf. Schuchardt 1885).

Dealing with convergence, however, requires some distinctions concerning the notion of „convergence”.

First of all, there have to be raised some questions: What is converging with what? Is a dialect variety converging with another variety of the same diasystem (another dialect, a standard language, a regiolect)? Or is it converging with a foreign language? And what are the results of convergence: one single variety as a result of dialect levelling or converging structures of still distinct varieties, or nothing at all, but a kind of „koine”, a higher stratum within the variational system of a linguistic community. If there are intralingual or even interlingual convergence phenomena, do they also occur in other German varieties? If so, gives this evidence to the assumption of a purely intralinguistic, may be typological, change which all German varieties are subject to, sooner or later, whereever in the world they exist: a kind of polycentric „convergence” in the sense of a parallel development from different diachronic stages coming closer to eachother?

We will mainly focus on the dialect-dialect-convergence, but since there are links between all these types of convergence mentioned above we have to take them into account. So, if we try to answer the questions above in a systematical way we’ll have to break it down into three elementary problems:

2.1 Convergence as a variety contact phenomenon

Dialect convergence is the classical topic of research on German speech islands in Russia.

The German settlements founded more than 200 years ago at the river Volga, in the Black Sea region, in the Caucasus mountains und later on in Siberia and Central Asia display a unique linguistic setting: The diversity of dialect varieties brought from numerous German regions into these colonies was an exceptional trait of the German „linguistic islands” which rarely could be found elsewhere in the world. In some villages several dozens of dialect varieties of
German coexisted and persisted for a long time due to the isolation of the settlements and their social, economical, cultural and even religious distance from the surrounding population. This has set in motion several waves of convergence starting from the very first moment of their existence. This was the reason why Viktor Schirmunski (1930) called the convergence and new mixture of Russian German varieties a „large-scale experiment on language history” and a „linguistic laboratory”, which was the origin of his theory of „primary” and „secondary” dialect features (see below).

The linguistic convergence during the first 100 years reduced the extreme heterogeneity of dialects to a still remarkable number of more or less integrated local varieties spoken as the everyday’s language. A common Russian-German variety or even regional colloquial varieties did not emerge. The High German Standard only existed among the élites within the colonies.

The deportations since 1938/1941 and the subsequent migrations after the abolishment of settlement restrictions 1956 reinforced linguistic heterogeneity. Migrations into mixed settlements in Siberia and Central Asia triggered a second wave of variety contact and dialect convergence, restricted, however, by the entirely new conditions of linguistic subordination and uprooting.

The construction of „central villages” out of closed-down small hamlets in the 1970s and the 1980s has led to a third phase of linguistic discontinuity, of variety convergence and, now, of language shift. These recent processes concerning convergence phenomena are observable „in vivo” today:

One of the linguistically well distinguished groups of the Germans in Russia are the Mennonites. Up to now, this religiously and culturally based group consists of the speakers with the highest maintenance of German. While all other groups have been facing an accelerating decline of their dialect varieties the Mennonites have retained their East Low German variety (and they dispose of some High German standard competence as their „language of service”). This is partly true also for the younger generations while the other groups are shifting to the Russian language. Today they are living in West Siberia and in the Orenburg region close to the Ural mountains.

But even this clearly distinguished group is not at all homogeneous: Among the Mennonites there are existing at least to major varieties, which have been brought along from their pre-war settlements in the Ukraine: the oldest Chortica variety and the more prestigious Molotchna variety.

Most of the well-known dialectologists concerned with Russian German varieties have studied the Mennonite varieties (see Mitzka 1930, Schirmunski 1930, Jedig 1966). According to the old theories there seemed to exist an upward convergence which has replaced Chortica features by those of the Molotchna variety: for example the Chortica rounded front vowel [y:] by the Molotchna long back vowel [u:] as in [fry:] - [fru:], High German standard Frau ‘woman’).

Viktor Schirmunski discussed the convergence phenomena among Russian German varieties under the notion of „primary” and „secondary” dialect features: Variety contact induces linguistic shift in the direction of High German standard features (or variety features which are closest to these). Since in the Russian German colonies High German standard is rarely available as a criterion of dialect levelling this has always been doubtful. But there has been some evidence in Ukrainian German varieties (of Hessian and Swabian origins).

In a recent study of variety convergence among Mennonites in the Orenburg region Nyman describes a more complex structure of levelling. He has tested the direction of convergence (by tape-recording interviews and collecting „distinction words”) in the still existing 22
Mennonite villages of the Orenburg region. Some features follow the Molotchna pattern, some others the Chortica pattern, and some do not converge at all:

Concerning the [u:] - [y:] distinction in [ut] - [yt] (High German standard aus ‘out (of)’), the Chortica feature [y:] has spread over all villages which had been linguistically clearly separated since the colonization at the turn of the century. This is hardly compatible to the old assumptions, and neither to Schirmunski’s „primary” and „secondary” dialect feature theory, because the Chortica feature [y:] is much more distant from the High German standard [au] than the Molotchna feature [u:] is. And this is true in other Mennonite settlements, too (cf. Berend/Jedig 1991, 177). At the time of colonization this feature was certainly a „primary” one. Either it has turned into a secondary (less distinctive) one or the speakers have adopted it due to the numerical superiority of Chortica settlements. Since the Chortica variety is less prestigious than the Molotchna variety, it looks like a downward convergence, but it may be also functioning as an attitudinal group symbol with the highest degree of traditionality, as a counter-movement against the strong assimilating pressure from the Russian outer world.

The lexical distribution of the words Molotchna knout and Chortica strank for ‘rope’ displays on the other hand a strict separation of the varieties as it is the case with some other items, too.

Concerning the [-n]-apocope, typical for the Molotchna variety – especially in the infinitive form of the verb (as in [ze:te] - [ze:ten] ‘to seek’) or in the plural of the weak noun inflection paradigm (as in [tloate] - [tloaten] ‘churches’) – convergence occurs towards the Molotchna variety: the apocope has been spreading, but only reaching most of the surrounding villages, which are called the „Unjadarpă” (‘Lower villages’) in contrast to the „Bowadarpa” (Upper villages), apparently forming subregional communities (may be unified by work on the same farms, the „kolkhoz”, or by joint school attendance).

Convergence seems to be a complex subject, with all directions of shifts, sometimes feature by feature.

As Andreas Dulson in the 1930s has shown by dialectological studies in extremely heterogeneous Volga German villages the Schirmunski criterion of „primary” and „secondary” dialect features is only one of several possibilities, but as an internal guide-line underlying the effect of other intervening factors. Dulson (1941: 85) proposed to consider seven factors: the norms of the standard and of a regional variety (if available), the nature of the original dialects, the social prestige of their speakers, the speakers’ attitudes towards variety features, the degree of heterogeneity in the speakers’ community and the internal developmental tendencies of linguistic change in the German varieties. Primarity of dialect features in the sense of Schirmunski depends on their salience in the linguistic evaluation system of the speakers. What is salient or not doesn’t generally depend on distance criteria established by linguists (such as systematicity, phoneme status or difference to the standard), but on listeners monitoring of this. It is paradigmatic, structured by markedness and affected by linguistic attitudes. Thus, if compact groups of variety speakers are confronted with one another, varieties may persist over a long time, and markers are consciously applied to draw the line of the subgroup boundaries. That groups are assumed to be „compact” is a matter of the number of speakers and of their separation, of the stability of group norms (in a wider range of linguistic and cultural features), of attitudes concerning the in- and the outgroup (and the world outside as well) and of the inclination to speech accommodation (in the sense of Giles/Coupland 1991). The higher the degree of heterogeneity within the linguistic community is the lower is the effect of group norms and the faster linguistic change occurs - up to the point, that „pure” inherent linguistic mechanisms are at work. Then, as Dulson (1941, 93) stated, it is no longer a matter of convergence or divergence of varieties, but a struggle „feature by feature”.

The restructuring of the linguistic community mentioned above is an intermediate state of convergence effects: The appearance of new regional and linguistic units (such as Lower and Upper villages among the Orenburg Mennonites) displays the spread of linguistic features of the Molotchna variety into the surroundings which transforms the group boundaries. Georg Dinges (1927), the most famous Volga German dialectologist in the 1920s, has described those processes at the Volga by lexical maps: In the north of the Volga German territory some new regional features came up under the influence of the only local country town Marxstadt, a kind of (lexical) convergence which was induced by trade and markets.

Sometimes confessional links formed the basis of such new units and cleared the way for convergence. The notion of speaking „catholic” or „lutheran” is widespread among Russian Germans, and very often it doesn’t stand for any confessional meaning, but for varieties.

Dania Asfandiarova (1999) has detected some interesting convergence phenomena among Russian Germans living in German settlements in the area of Ufa, Bashkortostan. She is describing dialect levelling in a representative three-generation study in the Prishib/Alekseevka colony consisting of four central villages which have been constructed out of eleven settlements founded at the turn of the century. Each village had had its own variety, but after having been merged into central villages in the early 1980s convergence has got under way. The study of convergence in the vowel system of the speakers exhibits a complex and sometimes confusing structure. Settlers in this colony came from the Black Sea area, speaking several dialect varieties, the most important so called Rhinefranconian varieties (varieties from East and South Rhine Palatinate and Hessian), but also Badenian, Swabian, Bavarian and other varieties. In the three „lutheran” villages Rhinefranconian features are prevailing, the fourth one, a „catholic” village, is different. But no one is homogeneous at all. The results of the study concerning the oldest generation (37 subjects, over 60 years old, free interviews) are impressive. What is striking is that dialect convergence seems to be highly selective: While the front vowel system (unrounded and rounded) and the closed back vowels are apparently levelled to a very high degree, this is not the case for (MHG) long and short a and the diphthong system. Here a considerable number of speakers are systematically using a back a-vowel, half-open or even closed [o] for (NHG) /a/ and /a:/ as in [gro:s] ‘gras’ or [vo:re] ‘waren’ (‘we were’) (also in the diphthong /au/) which to a great extent refers to the „catholic” variety spoken in the „catholic” village and among „catholics” in the „lutheran” villages. These speakers are presumably retaining some emblematic elements as markers of their variety which they call „Achterisch” (the number of their old village at the beginning of colonization), in contrast to „Sechserisch”, the variety of the „lutheran” majority even if the varieties have converged to a great extent. This might be supported by the existence of a „catholic” linguistic community and by „catholic” cultural traits supposed to exist with „catholics”.

2.2 Convergence as a language contact phenomenon

Speech islands are linguistic communities under strange circumstances: They go their own ways, sometimes in accordance with the varieties they’ve been derived from, and sometimes not. If not, what are the reasons of different development?

As far as external influence of the contact language is concerned, we would like to plead for a comparative method of speech island research. It seems to be fruitful to compare the linguistic change of German speech islands in different countries. If we can observe different linguistic processes of German varieties under the roofing of the Russian language, of the American English (as a Germanic language) and of the Brazilian Portuguese (as a Romance language in some aspects closer related to German than Russian), we will be able to draw some conclusions on the evidence of external induced change.
This will be illustrated by the following examples:

Among German settlers in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, South Brazil, the historical conditions of colonization have had much in common with those of the Russian Germans. Brazil inhabits about one million German-speaking people, this is the second place among all German minorities in the world (the former Soviet Union ranks first with about two million). Settlers have been living separated in small isolated colonies just as in Russia. They used predominantly their dialect varieties for communication, and since these varieties were quite different, dialect convergence was an inherent trait of their development. Dialect varieties cover a wide range from the prevailing (Rhinefranconian and Mosellefranconian) Hunsrück varieties over Swabian and Volga German to Low German Westfalian and Pomeranian varieties. The High German standard language was told in schools, but with the political restrictions under the nationalist government (of Getulio Vargas) in the 1940s all educational and political minority rights were suspended. Therefore, a redialectalization took place. In contrast to Russia, however, a superregional (Hunsrück) variety emerged which was never the case in Russia. Obviously the numerical dominance of the Hunsrück speakers (about 50% of the first settlers) and the closer network of communication which was not as limited as in Russia have led to this important difference. But dialect convergence in Brazil does not mean the complete integration of local basic varieties which still exist as so called „familetos” (varieties of family settlements). The superregional Hunsrück variety is not homogeneous at all, but a dialect continuum.\(^\text{35}\) It includes for example Rhinefranconian features with greater and Mosellefranconian features (e.g. dat/wat) with smaller acceptance.

Interestingly some elements emerging in Brazil and in Russia are quite similar, others are not although the dialect features partly were the same:

The sonorization has spread in both groups (voicing of consonants in intervocalic position and between vowel and sonant, following the stress: drogge High German standard trocken ‘dry’\(^\text{36}\)).

On the other hand nasalization and rhotacism have developed different:

Nasalization ([tsːː] High German standard Zahn ‘tooth’) is a common feature among Volga Germans\(^\text{37}\), but not among Hunsrück speakers even if the dialect bases were similar and even if Brazilian Portuguese has several nasalized vowels. Rhotacism ([sɔːr], High German standard sagten ‘(we) said’\(^\text{38}\)) is in some elements very common in Brazil, but in Russia only among some Upper Hessian speakers. There it has been replaced by standard forms, perhaps due to the fact that Volga Germans emigrated at least 60 years earlier than Brazil Germans, when rhotacism in Germany was just spreading\(^\text{39}\).

As we can see external linguistic influence plays a minor role in these differences. Of course, other elements exhibit much more interference: The loss of the definite article among younger Russian Germans is exclusively due to Russian influence, as Nöth (1994) found out: Russian Germans who had any even rudimentary competence of German varieties performed significantly better than those who had not\(^\text{40}\). Brazilian Germans, on the other hand, velarize the lateral /l/ which is due to Portuguese interference.

A development which has been investigated very frequently is the reduction of case morphology among German speakers in Russia\(^\text{41}\), in Brazil\(^\text{42}\), among Texas Germans\(^\text{43}\),

Pennsylvania Germans\textsuperscript{44} and Kansas Volga Germans\textsuperscript{45} in the United States and in other countries.

External effects might be possible in contact with Germanic and Romanic languages, of course. And some researchers argue in this way\textsuperscript{46}. On the other hand it’s just among „sectarian” Mennonite and Amish groups using consistently German varieties in every day conversation where case reduction maximally appears, and not among „non-sectarians” with intensive language contact. For case reduction among Russian Germans Russian influence is rather unlikely. The Russian language possesses six cases, which are consistently used, in the noun, pronoun and adjectival system. Russian interference should rather support the inflectional system of the German varieties and diminish or at least decelerate case reduction, but it doesn’t.

2.3 Convergence and intralinguistic change

Obviously, a typological change takes place which is observable in German varieties in general. Case reduction and loss of the preterite form part of a long term development from synthetic to analytic language structures. Of course, the German linguistic diasystem is still a „mixed type” with respect to the synthetic-analytic dimension\textsuperscript{47}. Today typology compares structures not languages\textsuperscript{48}. Consequently, some researchers argue that the German language does not display any uniform typological direction of development. But the main direction is the reduction of synthetic (or „fusionizing”\textsuperscript{49}) elements and the „externalization” of syntactic features, i.e. the distribution of functional features to different markers each one carrying only a few grammatical information.

Since the Middle High German shift of stress from the inflection morphemes to the stem vowel the case marking system in nominal declension has been reduced. Today High German noun inflection is for the most part restricted to the marking of the genitive singular and the plural\textsuperscript{50}, only the strong declension paradigm marks also the dative plural. Dative singular markers are optional. „The adjective marks the noun phrase for case, number and gender (...), if no other constituent of the noun phrase does so” (Eisenberg 1994: 367). Case, number and gender are generally marked by determiners. Thus, grammatical information has been moved more and more leftward, away from the head of the noun phrase to the adjective or further to the determiner, into a predeterminative position.

The reduction of nominal declension in German dialect varieties, however, goes deeper and faster. In general, the noun system has two cases (three cases in some Swabian varieties). The genitive in most functions is substituted by prepositional or dative constructions (plus possessive pronouns). Dative and accusative have usually merged into one oblique case (with altering forms, in the south and west more dative, in the north accusative). Pronoun inflection exhibits more case distinction than the noun inflection, the masculine more than the feminine and neuter, the singular more than the plural. Since the definite und indefinite determiners are also reduced to a two-case system (especially masculine and feminine forms), often represented by enclitics, frequently the grammatical information is given neither by noun nor by adjective nor by determiner inflection. In the German standard language the „rich inflectional morphology (...)” fulfils in part purely semantic functions; on the other hand, it is

\textsuperscript{42} Cf. Altenhofen (1996: 254ff.).
\textsuperscript{43} Cf. Salmons (1994: 60).
\textsuperscript{44} Cf. Louden (1994: 84); Huffines (1994: 50f.).
\textsuperscript{46} Cf. Louden (1994, 90).
\textsuperscript{47} Cf. Lang (1996: 12).
\textsuperscript{49} Cf. Wurzel 1996: 522).
\textsuperscript{50} Cf. Eisenberg 1994: 362).
in part clearly motivated syntactically” (Eisenberg 1994: 374). If case is marked in dialect varieties at all, syntactical or semantic information are morphologically expressed only to the extent of realizing the nominative (or common case) - oblique case distinction. Syntactic functions (e.g. noun-adjective-agreement) or semantic information (e.g. direct-indirect object relation) are more and more only a matter of word order not of morphology. In prepositional phrases the information is moved one step further leftward to the lexical element, the preposition.

When reviewing morphological processes in German-speaking speech islands we can observe another striking fact which is again suggesting internal typological processes common to more or less all German varieties or even to all Germanic and other Indo-European languages:

While reduction of noun declension is intensive, this is not the same for personal pronoun inflection which is more „conservative” and only in the last place subject to convergence. While in general dialect varieties exhibit a two-case system in noun, adjective and determiner inflection, personal pronouns frequently have a three-case system or retain at least the dative which includes the possibility to mark the direct-indirect object relation (by common case vs. dative).

The case system in Pennsylvania German personal pronouns (attached at the end of this article) may serve as an example which holds for many other German varieties:

This system applies for the linguistically more traditional non-sectarian speakers. Sectarians tend to reduce case marking; they use a three-case system only for the 1. and 2. Pers. sg. and the 3. Pers. sg. masculine. All other persons have a two-case system (3. Pers. sg. feminine and neuter, 3. Pers. pl.: common case versus dative; 1. and 2. Pers. pl., in some groups also 3. Pers. masculine: nominative versus oblique case51). Other German varieties exhibit a partial shift from dative to accusative, for example in Texas German: "Spricht er zu mich? ‘Is he talking to me?’"52. But here, too, dative marking is remarkably higher on personal pronouns than on determiners (four times as much53).

This, however, occurs also in the most other Germanic and in some Romanic languages, as is shown by the following synopsis54:

The case system in Danish personal pronouns has a three-term distinction (subjective or „non-oblique”, oblique, and possessive), while the only case distinction in noun inflection is the one between the common case and the genitive. The oblique forms in the 3. person singular and plural represent an Old Scandinavian dative.

The case system in Old English personal pronouns displays a three-term system in most personal pronouns. In contemporary English pronouns of the 3. person singular (masculine and feminine) and plural in the oblique case refer to Old English dative forms (which have been lost in Middle English), while noun inflection differentiates only between common case and possessive (old genitives).

French has lost almost all inflection, as Charles Bally (1965: 193) states:

„Le français s’est débarrassé de la plupart des flexions héritées du Latin: elles ont presque disparu du substantif, végètent dans l’adjectif (distinction sporadique du genre et du nombre) et ne subsistent à l’état de demi-système que dans le verbe, où d’ailleurs les destinances sont constamment battues en brèche (remplacement de nous par on, abandon du passé défini, de l’imparfait du subjonctif, déclin du reste de ce mode”.

But the case system in French „pronoms personnels conjoints”, the system of bound (or enclitic) personal pronouns, exhibits a two-term case marking, in the 3. person singular and

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54 Please note the hatchings.
plural („reference” in the words of Weinrich 1982) even a three-term distinction which is similar to the German dative („partner”).

So, what might be the supporting factors of case marking retention in pronoun inflection, (and especially of retaining former or present dative forms)?

We can account for seven factors:

1. The high frequency of pronouns makes them more resistant to change.
2. Pronouns are more likely to have animate referents which demands more morphological distinctions of syntactic roles.
3. Pronouns are closed classes which are differently lexicalised than open classes (see below).
4. Pronouns function as the head of a noun phrase, and heads are supposed to carry more morphological marking.
5. Pronouns are highly suppletive forms, and therefore individually lexicalised (see below). Loss of case marking on nouns seems to be less disruptive than the replacement of entire lexical items.
6. The syntactic serialization in the middle field of the German verbal frame exhibits (in contrast to noun phrases) the unmarked order: subject - direct object (accusative) - indirect object (dative). This corresponds with an unmarked order: known before new, unstressed before stressed. This might support dative retention, too.
7. In neurolinguistics researchers are recently discussing, if words are represented in the lexicon as entire units („full listing”) or in decomposition. New research gives evidence for a full listing representation of monomorphmatic words and polymorphmatic words with irregular word formation (as well as less productive morphological paradigms and semantically less transparent words). That is exactly true for personal pronouns. According to Kiparsky (1982) these full listed items are represented on the deepest lexicon level. This might protect them from change.

Thus, we have good reasons to assume that the dynamic and even the structure of case reduction in German dialect varieties is to a great extent a typological change, not caused directly by dialect or interlingual convergence. On the other hand we may ask what the reasons or conditions of a „typological” change might be. The reduction of complex information attached to a single formal unit and the externalization of syntactic features may lead us to neurolinguistic explanations which could perhaps be paralleled with processes underlying pidginization and creolization.

3 Sociolinguistics of convergence

If we have differentiated between the three processes of dialect convergence, external convergence and linguistic change this has been due to analytic correctness. We did not yet answer the question: Why do these processes take place in that moment? Due to which conditions occurs an acceleration of convergence or of change? Why are some features at a time salient to linguistic change and others not? What is the sociolinguistic environment that makes some features survive and others be lost? Describing the structure of linguistic developments includes shedding a light on the relation between all these factors mentioned above.

In order to have a more concrete linguistic phenomenon at hand, we will give an example which will show the complex nature of the convergence problem:

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55 Cf. Salmons (1994: 64f.).
Since a couple of years the Russian German Mennonites display remarkable changes in the morphological system of their variety: the reduction of cases mentioned above as well as a gradual loss of the preterite.\textsuperscript{58} Actually, the loss of the preterite is not typical for Low German varieties, but for Middle and Upper German varieties.

What might be the conditions of this rapid change?

Of course, Mennonites have been establishing linguistic contact with other German-speaking groups. The construction of „central villages” has also transformed the former Mennonite settlements into heterogeneous villages. This caused intensive dialect contact.

But, on the other hand, Mennonites have maintained their variety and use it for intragroup communication, whereas the German standard language or Russian serves for intergroup communication. The tight Mennonite network functions as a stronghold of the Low German variety which rarely can be used for intergroup contacts, because only some older non-Mennonite people understand it, but not the younger generation (which has lost the German Standard, too). For intergroup communication Russian has displaced German, but not for intragroup conversation. This is well attested by an investigation in a village in the Altai region, West Siberia, a major German settlement area in Russia: For intragroup communication Mennonites use exclusively German to a degree of about 60%, for intergroup communication only 20%.\textsuperscript{59} Additionally we compiled sociogram of an eleventh school class illustrating this effect. The pupils were asked: Who are your friends in this class, and which language do you predominantly use for communication with him/her?

The sociogram displays friendship clusters within the class: Multiplex patterns mainly link Mennonite-Mennonite-clusters (with differences between boys and girls). The communicational activities are conducted in Russian and German. Russian is used in all clusters, but mainly with non-Mennonites. The striking result is the fact that for communication in German is (with two exceptions) only taking place with Mennonites.

As we can see, even young Mennonites partly have their own linguistic network. This protects the Mennonite variety more or less from interferences induced by other German varieties. Thus, linguistic change due to the factor of dialect convergence is not very likely.

The loss of preterite might rely on Russian influence. The displacement of the German preterite by the present perfect could be motivated by an intended „simulation” of the Russian perfective verbal aspect. But, on the other hand, the Mennonites are the group with the most separated use of bilingualism, and therefore borrowing and interference of Russian elements are less than among other groups. This, however, does not protect from structural interference as we know from the „sectarians” in the United States.

Of course, all factors mentioned above have an impact on the change process. The direction of change is not surprising: It fits the common patterns of change occurring in most German varieties.

But change is very rapid. How could this be explained? As we stated above, systematic or typological change depends on stability or instability of norms. Norms are affected by the distinctness of linguistic communities, by the discreteness of marking group boundaries. Norm stability is first of all norm certainty and norm loyalty. In our case norm certainty is lowered by the heterogeneity of the mixed Mennonite settlements. Loyalty as an attitudinal matter tends to decline if cultural and linguistic group boundaries become doubtful. In fact, this is true for Mennonites because religious and cultural values are weakened, intermarriages are increasing, and mobility is growing.

\textsuperscript{58} Cf. Grinjowa (1990).
\textsuperscript{59} Cf. Rosenberg (1994b: 294); the study covered about 750 queries, including the whole school youth and every fifth inhabitant of the village.
The interdependence of a change in linguistic behavior and the erosion of group norms has been proved by Göz Kaufmann (1997: 320): Kaufmann investigated Mennonites in Mexico and Texas. In his conclusions he emphasizes the fact that a strong correlation between attitudinal and linguistic data points to an extreme heterogeneity of the group affecting the disposition to linguistic behavior: The young „progressive” males among the Mexican Mennonites display many and strong correlations, the conservative ones few and weak correlations. This seems to explain the remarkable change of linguistic behavior among the young progressive males who are converging to the Spanish language (replacing the Mennonite High variety Hüagdietsch), whereas the conservative Mennonites do not. The Texas Mennonite group displays only few and weak correlations, because their process of change is largely completed (shift to English). Kaufmann discusses this in terms of Weinreich et al. (1968: 185f.): „in the earliest and latest stages of a change, there may be very little correlation with social factors”. Strong correlations are related to behavior guided by attitudes, weak correlations to normative behavior.

As Eugenio Coseriu states, linguistic (and cultural) norms are the front line of linguistic change: „A linguistic change starts and develops always as a ‘shift’ of the norm” (Coseriu 1974: 119; transl. P.R.). As the norm is the linguistic amount of what is usually done in a language, while the system contains what is possible in a language, the norm will always be the gateway for linguistic change within the limits of the system (and in the same way the system for typological change). Thus, systematical changes „are very frequent and wide spreading in times of weak tradition and of cultural decay or in communities with limited linguistic culture” (Coseriu 1974: 117; transl. P.R.). Among the Russian German Mennonites, this decline of linguistic and cultural norms clears the way for an accelerated systematical and typological change which is not linear due to convergence, but contact-induced:

„The most important force supporting the development of the latent innerlinguistic tendencies just turns out to be the external influence of ‘extralinguistic’, mainly sociological effects” (Hutterer 1975: 453; transl. P.R.).

The linguistic description of these complex processes requires an integrated approach providing methodology from sociolinguistics, dialectology and research on language change. Comparative speech island research seems to be a promising field of application.

Speech islands offer to the researcher a main methodological advantage: They are well observable as limited communities in time, space and social structure, and, as such, they are explorable as a communicative network. This was the great insight of speech island researchers in the past – as Schirmunski (1930) emphasized: Speech islands are in fact „linguistic laboratories”.

Within these dense networks, however, speech islands display intense processes of variety contact (linguistic variation and variety convergence), of language contact (language interference and language shift) and of linguistic change. The intermesh of these processes may be the main subject of a sociolinguistic speech island research.
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Melika, Georg (1990): „Integration der deutschen mundartlichen Artikulationsbasis mit der ukrainischen und ungarischen Basis in Mukatschewo“. (ms., unveröff.).


Case system in Pennsylvania German personal pronouns (Van Ness 1994, 430)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. sg.</td>
<td>ix</td>
<td>mix</td>
<td>mir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘I’</td>
<td>‘me’</td>
<td>‘me’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. sg.</td>
<td>du</td>
<td>dix</td>
<td>dir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. masc.</td>
<td>ar</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>im</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘he’</td>
<td>‘him’</td>
<td>‘him’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. fem.</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>sie</td>
<td>ire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘she’</td>
<td>‘her’</td>
<td>‘her’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. neut.</td>
<td>es</td>
<td>es</td>
<td>im</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘it’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. pl.</td>
<td>mir/mer</td>
<td>uns</td>
<td>uns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘we’</td>
<td>‘us’</td>
<td>‘us’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. pl.</td>
<td>dírírderernérnír</td>
<td>aich</td>
<td>aich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. pl.</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>ine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘they’</td>
<td>‘them’</td>
<td>‘them’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case system in Old English personal pronouns (Van Kemenade 1994, 121)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. sg.</td>
<td>ic</td>
<td>me:</td>
<td>me:</td>
<td>mi:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘I’</td>
<td>‘me’</td>
<td>‘me’</td>
<td>‘my/of me’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. sg.</td>
<td>þu</td>
<td>þe:</td>
<td>þe:</td>
<td>þi:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘your/of you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. masc.</td>
<td>he:</td>
<td>hine</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘he’</td>
<td>‘him’</td>
<td>‘him’</td>
<td>‘his/of him’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. fem.</td>
<td>he:o</td>
<td>hi:</td>
<td>hire</td>
<td>hire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘she’</td>
<td>‘her’</td>
<td>‘her’</td>
<td>‘her/of her’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. neut.</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘its/of it’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. pl.</td>
<td>we:</td>
<td>u:s</td>
<td>u:s</td>
<td>u:re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘we’</td>
<td>‘us’</td>
<td>‘us’</td>
<td>‘our/of us’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. pl.</td>
<td>ge:</td>
<td>e:ow</td>
<td>e:ow</td>
<td>e:ower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘your/of you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. pl.</td>
<td>hi:</td>
<td>hi:</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>hira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘they’</td>
<td>‘them’</td>
<td>‘them’</td>
<td>‘their/of them’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Case system in Danish personal pronouns** (Haberland 1994, 328)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Non-oblique</th>
<th>Oblique</th>
<th>Possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. sg.</td>
<td>jeg</td>
<td>mig</td>
<td>min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘I’</td>
<td>‘me’</td>
<td>‘my’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. sg.</td>
<td>du</td>
<td>dig</td>
<td>din</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘your’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. masc.</td>
<td>han</td>
<td>ham</td>
<td>hans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘he’</td>
<td>‘him’</td>
<td>‘his’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old Scand. dative: honum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. fem.</td>
<td>hun</td>
<td>hende [hinne]</td>
<td>hendes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘she’</td>
<td>‘her’</td>
<td>‘her’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old Scand. dative: henni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. neut.</td>
<td>det</td>
<td>det</td>
<td>dets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘its’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[- human]</td>
<td>[- human]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sg. non neut.</td>
<td>den</td>
<td>den</td>
<td>dens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘it’</td>
<td>‘its’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[- human]</td>
<td>[- human]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. pl.</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>os</td>
<td>vores/vor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘we’</td>
<td>‘us’</td>
<td>‘our’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. pl.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>jer</td>
<td>jeres/(eder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>‘your’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. pl.</td>
<td>de [di]</td>
<td>dem</td>
<td>deres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘they’</td>
<td>‘them’</td>
<td>‘their’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Old Scand. dative: honum
Old Scand. dative: henni
Old Scand. dative: þeim (distal demonstrative)
Case system in French „pronoms personnels conjoints“ (cf. Weinrich 1982, 82)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker</strong></td>
<td>je</td>
<td>me/m’</td>
<td>me/m’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sg.)</td>
<td>‘I’ (‘ich’)</td>
<td>‘me’ (‘mich’)</td>
<td>‘me’ (‘mir’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressee</strong></td>
<td>tu</td>
<td>te/t’</td>
<td>te/t’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sg.)</td>
<td>‘you’ (‘du’)</td>
<td>‘you’ (‘dich’)</td>
<td>‘you’ (‘dir’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reference (masc.)</strong></td>
<td>il</td>
<td>le/l’</td>
<td>lui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sg.)</td>
<td>‘he’ (‘er’)</td>
<td>‘him’ (‘ihn’)</td>
<td>‘him’ (‘ihm’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reference (femin.)</strong></td>
<td>elle</td>
<td>la/l’</td>
<td>lui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sg.)</td>
<td>‘she’ (‘sie’)</td>
<td>‘her’ (‘sie’)</td>
<td>‘her’ (‘ihr’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker</strong></td>
<td>nous (on)</td>
<td>nous</td>
<td>nous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pl.)</td>
<td>‘we’ (‘wir’)</td>
<td>‘us’ (‘uns’)</td>
<td>‘us’ (‘uns’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressee</strong></td>
<td>vous</td>
<td>vous</td>
<td>vous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pl.)</td>
<td>‘you’ (‘ihr, Sie’)</td>
<td>‘you’ (‘euch, Sie’)</td>
<td>‘you’ (‘euch, Ihnen’)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reference (masc.)</strong></td>
<td>ils</td>
<td>les</td>
<td>leur</td>
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<td>(pl.)</td>
<td>‘they’ (‘sie’)</td>
<td>‘them’ (‘sie’)</td>
<td>‘them’ (‘ihmen’)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reference (femin.)</strong></td>
<td>elles</td>
<td>les</td>
<td>leur</td>
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<tr>
<td>(pl.)</td>
<td>‘they’ (‘sie’)</td>
<td>‘them’ (‘sie’)</td>
<td>‘them’ (‘ihmen’)</td>
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